moving on from all that

Seth Cable

“Children used to be made here,” said the old man. He gestured below, towards the structure at the bottom on the hill – crumbling, dark, and empty.

“Played, Granddad,” responded the young man. “Children used to be played here. As in ‘made to play’.” His eyes flashed to the young woman. “Children played here. It was a gymnasium.”

“Children!” called the young woman, gathering the seven towards her. “Let’s all sing... let’s all sing ‘God Destroy the Yesteryear’.” A crowd of uncertain voices stumbled together, loud enough to obscure the old man’s reply.

“No, that’s not right. They were made here. Children. Formed. Created.”

“Granddad... That. Is. Not. Right.” With face fixed on his grandfather, his eyes anxiously scanned the air.

“Aw, the hell it isn’t. I was there. I worked there. I fed them. I held them. I’d find the ones that couldn’t keep – eyes hidden in yellow film, pieces pulsing, vibrating, holes in the wrong places, or too many. I’d find them, though they tried to stay hid... I’d find them... Always...”

From behind the sounds of the forest, the children’s voices were joined by the purr of an approaching drone, and then a series of clicks from the vicinity of the young couple.